

TESTIMONY – GENERAL LAW PUBLIC HEARING 3/5/2020

Bill No. S.B. 13 – An Act Expanding Economic Opportunity in Licensed Occupations

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**Position: Opposed to: SECTION 3, Subsection (b); SECTION 4; and
SECTION 8, Subsection (a) (1-4)**

Senate Bill No. 13 evolved from a study undertaken by NCSL, in partnership with CSG and National Governors Association Center for Best Practices to: 1) Ensure existing/new licensing requirements are not overly broad or burdensome and don't create unnecessary barriers to labor market entry; and 2) improve portability for selected occupational licenses across state lines.

I can only speak to Occupational Licensing under C.G.S. Chapter 393, including, but not limited to licensing for electrical work, plumbing & piping work, solar thermal work, heating, piping/cooling work, elevator installation, repair/maintenance work, fire protection sprinkler systems work, irrigation work, sheet metal work, medical gas/vacuum systems work, etc, trades licensed to perform work in the construction industry, which includes residential, commercial, institutional, educational, and industrial construction, repair/maintenance and inspection of systems and equipment.

The construction industry is designated as “high risk and safety sensitive”. The rules, regulations, education and training requirements, classroom/OJT, testing, and continuing education requirements have been developed over time in CT by the DCP with input from people in the trades. The DCP and the Industry have worked over the years to ensure the safety of the employees, the consumer, and the public and have developed best practices to deal with apprenticeships, military licensees, licenses for out-of state licensees and violations of law.

MCACT's opposition to listed provisions in this bill could be eliminated by **exempting all occupational licenses listed under Chapter 393 from SB 13's provisions.** Opportunities for careers in these licensed trades exist for those who have math and reading skills and ability to learn the trade and the wherewithal to complete the apprenticeship training and pass the test.

Section 3(b)(2) of the bill allows hiring one “preapprentice” as defined in CGS 31-23. **Subsection (c) reads: “No minor under the age of eighteen years shall be employed or permitted to work in any occupation which has been or shall be pronounced hazardous to health by the DPH or pronounced hazardous in other respects by the Labor Department”.** This bill would allow the minor to work on a construction site that is classified as “high risk, safety sensitive”. THAT DOES NOT MAKE SENSE! Nor does it make sense to arbitrarily require instruction for a HANDS-ON CONSTRUCTION TRADE to be taught remotely as required in Section 4. MCACT Contractors and Plumbers & Pipefitters Union Local 777 have an excellent and successful apprenticeship training program and it does not cost the state a dime nor does it cost the apprentices any money. The state reaps the benefits with apprenticeship sponsor fees, license fees and enforcement fines.

Connecticut has no reciprocity for Chapter 393 licensees in other states (Section 8) and the state has its own system already set up to determine what type of training an out of state licensee has as compared to CT's standards. To give someone a license just because they have held a license in another state for 2 years is pretty risky. Who will be the responsible party if this new licensee makes a serious mistake on the job? The taxpayers???? CT's system is working for the Chapter 393 licensees and the state. Many states just issue a license to collect a fee. Ever been in a hotel where the hot and cold water are reversed? (joyce.wojtas@outlook.com – 860-280-4623)